



REGULAR MEETING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD (EDAB)

Held at the City of Moab Conference Center
217 E Center Street
Moab, Utah 84532

[Recording](#)

MINUTES February 28, 2024 | 3:00pm

****Time stamps correspond to the video****

Members in Attendance: Forrest Rodgers, Shalee Bryant, Michael Black, Melisa Jeffers, Chris Wilson, Dave Sakrison, Mary McGann, Ben Fredregill (Grand County Economic Development), Jazmine Duncan

Members in Attendance Remotely: Elissa Martin, Justin Bergeman, Ashley Korenblat

Members not in Attendance: Kelly Thornton

Also Present: Sky White (Grand County Economic Development), Bega Metzner (Moab to Monument Valley Film Commission), Camille Otto (SERDA), Colette Cox (Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity), Kristian Olsen (USU)

Welcome

00:11:14

Introductions

00:11:30

Conflicts of interest, disclosures, ex-parte communication

00:14:45 - None at this time

Citizens to -be- heard

00:14:45 - None at this time

Presentations, if any

00:14:45 - None at this time

Discussion and Action Items:

A. Approval of 01/31/24 Meeting Minutes -Sky White

{Draft Meeting Minutes included in meeting prep materials}

00:15:45

Chris Wilson makes a motion to approve the 01/31/2024 EDAB Regular Meeting Minutes

Shalee Bryant seconds.

No Discussion.

All in favor, motion passes unanimously.

B. Grand County Economic Development Department Updates - Ben Fredregill

00:16:15

Discussion included:

- Grand Area Mentoring (GAM) - Chris Marsh and team met with EDD and presented to the Commission with a request to grow the program. GAM is seeking funding from the school board, city and the county for both GAM and the BEACON afterschool program.
- Attended Chamber Retreat and presented Chamber with \$125K grant check funded by GOEO for the 2024 Grand Summit, facilitating business needs assessment and facilitating business training.
- Tourism Council has started developing a comprehensive marketing plan. Planning will continue into next month. Competitive analysis, SWOT analysis and strategy around what the target for marketing should be.
- Attended SERDA Board meeting in Price. Federal Railroad Administration Corridor is working on rail service expansion to include Moab.
- Utah Film Studio tour.
- Utah Office of Tourism meetings addressed strategies for Sales Missions, Australian market, potential for direct flight from Korea to SLC opening up new market potential.
- Secret Shopper program.
- Grand County doesn't monetize tourists very well; strategies to improve this.
- Cem Gardner strategic meeting.
- Love Communications meeting. Discussion included reduction in flight service and the implication; Co-op Marketing strategies; Asian market, opportunities and influencers.
- Jill Jensen, ABC meeting. Discussion included marketing strategy opportunities.
- Working on cost comparisons for travel to/from Moab.
- STAR Grant reporting continues.
- Jeremy Spaulding meeting.
- USU meeting with Kristian Olsen.
- Local landscape: Cactus Jacks and 98 Center have reopened. Moab Museum has new exhibit in town and an exhibit at Dead Horse State park. Lots of great opportunities to market what is new in Moab to potential travelers.
- Continue to explore the offseason opportunities in Moab.
- 8 hotels are listed for sale in Moab. Hotel market is tough with the volume of rooms in Moab and the amount of down time in the County.
- Main Street America program launch meetings were hosted at 98 Center. More meetings will be held in the next few months.
- Question - Are we a tourism economy or a gateway community for a place everyone wants to come see?
- Travel to ITB in Berlin scheduled for early March. Goal is to evaluate if these types of events are worth investing in into the future - if so, what is the best strategy?

- Voluntourism opportunities.

Discussion included:

- Mighty 5 Campaign and bringing it back. Coordination with Nadalie Randall, Camille Johnson and discussion around strategic marketing around Timed Entry.
- Why are visitors coming - outdoor experiences. We need to improve the product mix for why people come to Moab, which is outdoor experiences. We need to do a deeper dive into the market. We will need to do more work on the product we are marketing - outdoor experiences.
- Expansion opportunities in art and retail will support the product mix in Moab as well.

C. Chamber of Commerce Updates - Shalee Bryant

00:53:50

Discussion included:

- 2 Board Members have resigned. One due to running for County Commission and they felt there was a conflict of interest. Director, Laici, resigned due to a new job opportunity with USU.
- Currently hiring for a Director and Assistant Director.
- Nonprofits are seeing a drop in donations across the community. Businesses are stating they don't have enough profit to donate.
- Airport Board has discussed the importance of implementing a Strategic Plan for the airport. The Board is interested in working with EDAB to source funding to launch something like this.

D. Grand County Revolving Loan Fund + SERDA Updates - Camille Otto

{Information sheets included in agenda packet}

01:00:00

Discussion included:

- Last year GC set aside \$400K in funds for businesses to access microloans with SERDA.
- 3 Businesses have started conversations, but no applications have been submitted.
- Funding can support all stages of business operations including start ups, expansion and retention funds.
- Flexible repayment, lower interest rates and flexible collateral available. Fixed rate upon close.
- Press release and advertisements in the Moab Sun and Times Independent have been published.
- \$10K-\$150K loan amounts.
- Chamber requested a presentation from SERDA in the future.

E. USU and Wild Cat Fund

01:06:00

Discussion included:

- SBDC USU role has reposted as of yesterday. Discussion on job description to fulfill current contract agreement between USU and Grand County.
- USU has been working with Weber State to bring on servicing the Wild Cat Fund through USU. This will allow USU to support small business owners with small infusions of cash with the commitment to accept mentoring from the USU SBDC staff. If business owners meet targeted goals, they will be able to reapply for this funding a total of 3 times.
- USU has submitted an EDU grant application to support bringing this program to USU and should receive notice in the next few weeks.
- Working with Ben, Ashley Korenblat, and EDD on exploring opportunities to support an expansion of USU with an educational institute to leverage how gateway communities support tourism. Green tourism is a rising topic in the industry and could be a focus of study. Potential for USU to form an institute that researches the challenges of gateway communities and support education with a specialty focus on this topic. USU is exploring funding for something along these lines.
- Opportunity to review existing programs through USU to support the concept of the discussed 'Outdoor Institute.'

F. City of Moab Strategic Planning Updates - Michael Black

01:30:30

Discussion included:

- Departments gave presentations. Staff are concerned that employees are still doing 2 jobs, which started during the pandemic downsizing.
- Primary topics of focus included: Infrastructure, Funding Sources, Housing Affordability.
- Pillars include:
 - Tourism Trajectory and Economic Diversification: Parking in downtown; pedestrian enhancement; Transit Program ongoing and is being modified along the way; examining zoning (Consultant working on this now); Downtown Master Plan (Late Spring kickoff, UDOT will be involved, pedestrian safety, downtown look and function, regulation and policy review, garbage cans, recycling program, benches, etc); Walk Audit will be scheduled and will kickstart the Downtown Master Planning process.
 - Affordability and Equity
 - Leadership and Decision Making
 - Environmental Stewardship
 - Workforce
 - Housing Community Fabric and Wellbeing

- Red Rock Flats 1 and 2 are in development - 130 long-term rental units will be coming. At least 30% will be affordable workforce housing. 72 will be breaking ground this year. Property is deed restricting.
- County support will be accepted in the future. City is its own political subdivision of the state.
- Current parking construction project updates - 192 spaces will be added to the current number of spaces that are available downtown. Updates can be viewed on the website. Timeline for completion has been reduced from 18 to 7 months. Using a local contractor. Please reach out to Lisa from the City with suggestions on how the City can better update the community on the progress of the project. No lanes will be closed to travel. Contractors will be working on no more than 2 - 3 blocks at a time. There has been a new consultant hired to educate business owners on the progress of the construction. City will follow up to ensure they reach out more aggressively in the future.

G. Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity Updates - Colette Cox

01:58:00

Discussion included:

- Chamber Tourism Day Monday morning. Colette, Camillie Johnson, and Tourism staff from the State will attend.
- Aligning partners and working through EDD, Tourism, Cities and Eastern AOG will be critical in developing infrastructure projects that will seek legislative funding.
- It is now time to plan for RCG and RCOG for next year.
- Ryan Starks will be visiting Grand County in June along with the GOEO Executive Team.
- Continue to look at the communities outside of Moab City when considering grant application projects for next year.

Consideration of Future Agenda Items

Discussion included:

- Strategic Planning Opportunities for CNY Airport.
- Amended Bylaw Review.
- Strategic Planning Updates.
- STAR Grant Updates.
- Walk Audit Updates.
- USU SBDC Role Updates.

At 02:06:00, Forrest adjourned the meeting.